Bibliographic Research Plan

**The History of Gems**

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LIS 601- Professor Vanessa Irvin

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**Introduction**

In 2013, there was a new cartoon that started to air on Cartoon Network. It is called “Steven Universe”, and it is about gemstones. The main characters are a boy who is half human, half Gem, which is an alien race that are basically magical anthropomorphic gems, as well as his 3 Gem caretakers.\(^1\) Now, in 2016, the show has a large fanbase which surprisingly consists of teenagers and young adults, not the targeted child audience. I have noticed that many of these fans have an interest in gemstones or have rekindled an old interest in gemstones because of the show, and want to learn more about gemstones because they think gemstones are beautiful and want to expand the world of the show and create new characters based on gems not seen in the show yet. In order to do that, it would be best for them to know about the entwined history and folklore of gems, so they can see what meanings, magical properties, and symbolism that gems have in multiple cultures and create their characters based off of that.\(^2\) In this bibliography, I wish to focus on the history of gemstones, as well as the history of the search for both natural and artificial gems and on the mystical, religious, and cultural meanings of gems in human cultures.

**Audience**

This bibliography is aimed at the teenage and young adult fans of Steven Universe who have sparked or rekindled an interest in gemstones because of the characters from the show. I will primarily use the UH Voyager system since there is more academic material on the history of gemstones there as opposed to the Hawaii State Public Library System. I have selected sources that focus more on the history of gems and that keep technical information to a minimum for these teens and young adults.

**Citation Style and Coding Key**

The citation style used in this bibliography is Chicago, as directed by *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition. In this bibliography plan, both subject heading controlled vocabulary (CV) terms and Boolean search terms (i.e. AND, OR, NOT) will be written in ALL CAPS. Natural language terms and keywords will be written in lower case.

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Search Strategy

Library of Congress Subject Headings
In order to find the subject headings that are related to my topic, I used the 29th edition of Library of Congress Subject Headings, published in 2006. Since the subject headings made by the Library of Congress are used as controlled vocabulary in many libraries nationwide and in many online research databases, it is fairly useful for finding keywords and creating search strings. With this source, I looked up the term “gemstones” and found some useful subject headings for my topic, both broad and specific. They are:

- GEMS
- GEMS—HISTORY
- GEMS—FOLKLORE
- GEMS—RELIGIOUS ASPECTS
- GEMS—REPRODUCTION
- GEMS IN LITERATURE
- PRECIOUS STONES
- PRECIOUS STONES—ARTIFICIAL
- PRECIOUS STONES—PSYCHIC ASPECTS
- PRECIOUS STONES—COLLECTIONS AND PRESERVATION
- ASTROLOGY AND GEMS

The difference between “GEMS” and “PRECIOUS STONES” is that “GEMS” focuses more on the historical and cultural aspects of gemstones, while “PRECIOUS STONES” focus more on what gemstones are and the scientific aspects of gemstones.

Call Numbers
In order to find the Library of Congress (LCC) call numbers that are assigned to the history of gems, I consulted the official LCC classification website. I used the search string “gem folklore” in the Keyword search box and found the call number. I also looked up the search string “precious stones” and found several relevant call numbers. If you would like to look up works about the history of gemstones, I would recommend looking in these sections:

LC Call Number
- GR805
  Folklore—By subject—Nature—Animals, plants, and minerals—Minerals and rocks.
  Folklore of stones—Precious stones. Gems
- QL430.7.P77
  Zoology—Invertebrates—Mollusca—Systematic divisions—Bivalvia (Lamellibranchia; pelecypoda; clams)—By family, A-Z—Pteriidae (Pearl oysters)
- TS750-757
Manufactures of Gems

- RZ560
  Other systems of medicine—Miscellaneous systems and treatments—Precious stones. Gems
- BF1442 .P74
  Occult sciences—Special topics, A-Z—Precious stones. Gems
- BF1729 .G4
  Occult sciences—Astrology—Special topics—Other special topics, A-Z—Gems
- TP873-TP873.5
  Chemical technology—Artificial gems
- TS740
- TS747-TS757
- QE392-QE394 .T8
  Geology—Mineralogy—Precious stones
- NK7650-NK7690.J33
- TN980
  Mining engineering. Metallurgy—Building and ornamental stones—Ornamental stones. Gems—General works

**Dewey Decimal System Call Numbers**

I also looked for the Dewey Decimal System call numbers for the history of gems and related topics as well, so people who want to find books about the history of gems at their local public library can find it there. The book that I looked through was the *DDC 22*, which was published in 2003. I used the keywords “gems” and “artificial gems” in order to locate these call numbers.

- Gems-553.8
- Diamonds-553.82
- Rubies and Sapphires-553.84
- Emeralds-553.86
- Semiprecious Stones-553.87
- Opals-553.873
- Jade-553.876
- Amber-553.879
- Synthetic Gems-666.88
- Prospecting Gems-622.188
- Mineralogy-549
- Pearl Oysters-639.412

**Search Terms**

As mentioned above, both subject heading controlled vocabulary (CV) terms and Boolean search
terms (i.e. AND, OR, NOT) will be written in ALL CAPS. Natural language terms and keywords will be written in lower case. An asterisk is used here for truncation.

Search Terms: gems, gemstones, precious stones, culture, history, artificial gems, meanings, uses, astrology, search for gems.

Boolean Expressions: gemstones AND history OR culture, gemstones AND meanings OR uses, precious stones AND artificial AND history, gem* n6 history OR culture, precious stones AND cultur*

Natural Language Search Strings: meanings and uses of gemstones, history of gemstones, the history of creating artificial gems, history of finding gems, gemstones in human culture, gemstones culture.

**Search Process**

**Hawaii Voyager: Libraries of the University of Hawaii System**
The library catalog of the University of Hawaii has many different ways to search for items. I decided to go with the Boolean string “gemstones AND culture”. I found 3 results, one of which was a book about the history of pearls in multiple human cultures. I also searched “SK: PRECIOUS STONES” and got many good results. I also searched by call number “GR805” which is the call number for gemlore. I got several relevant results from that. Two of them that stood out was *Gemlore: Ancient Secrets and Modern Myths from the Stone Age to the Rock Age*, which fit the subtopic “Gems in Human Cultures” perfectly, and *Precious Stones: Their History and Mystery*, which is a book about the history of gems in human cultures. The UH Library System has many great resources about the history of gems, especially about gemlore and gems in human cultures.

**Library of Congress Online Catalog**
What I did for this OPAC is that I searched for items by subject headings and call numbers instead of the usual keyword and Boolean searches. Since this is the Library of Congress, they use the Library of Congress Subject Headings and call numbers. It is much more direct and narrower than keyword and Boolean searches. I couldn’t find anything relevant when searching the subject headings “SH: ASTROLOGY AND GEMS” and “SH: ASTROLOGY AND GEMS—EARLY WORKS TO 1800”, but I managed to find a lot of relevant material by searching “SH: GEMS—FOLKORE” and “SH: GEMS—HISTORY”. I also managed to find more resources by searching “CN: GR805”, which is the call number for gemlore. There are a lot of non-English resources, which can make it difficult to search. Like the UH library system, Library of Congress has a lot of books about the history of gems, so it is a very useful resource.
Databases and Indexes

Academic Search Complete
I went to the Academic Search Complete database and looked in the Subject Terms section for relevant terms. When searching, I also made sure to keep the “Full Text” limiter on to make it easier to find accessible articles. There was one broad subject term for my topic, “GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES”, and several subtopics such as history and religious aspects. I tried the subtopics most relevant to this project and decided to try history, psychic aspects, collection and development, reproduction, and religious aspects. I tried “SU: GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES” and “SU: GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES—COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION” but I got very little relevant material. However, when I searched “SU: GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES AND AF: history” and “AF: gemstones AND history”, I found a lot of relevant articles. Then, I searched with the Boolean phrase “gemstones AND history”, and found 6 relevant resources. Through looking through the results for “SU: GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES AND AF: history”, I found a review for a book called Stoned: Jewelry, Obsession, and How Desire Shapes the World. I checked both HSPLS and the UH library system for this book, and it turns out that HSPLS has copies of it. Overall, Academic Search Complete is a great source for finding periodical articles both scholarly and not about the history of gemstones.

JSTOR
For this database, I had to search using keywords and Boolean expressions since there are no subject terms on this database. I got several decent resources from combining the keywords “precious stones” and “culture”. I also got many good resources from searching “precious stones AND history”. I only found a couple of resources by searching “gemstones AND history”, “gemstones AND culture”, and “artificial gems”. Most of the articles that I found were over 40 years old, but that it because JSTOR focuses on providing historical articles. Overall, JSTOR is a decent source for finding historical periodical articles about the history of gemstones.

Gale Virtual Reference Library
This database is offered both through the UH library system and the Hawaii State Public Library System, but I used the HSPLS subscription because they offer much more resources than the UH subscription. Since this database has a Boolean style searching system for their advanced search, I decided to use Boolean strings. First, I tried the Boolean string “gemstones AND history OR culture” and found some results. I then used the keyword “gemstones” as a subject search and got 2 relevant results. Interestingly, they were both sources about artificial gems, even though I didn’t search that term. I got many good results from searching “SU: PRECIOUS STONES”, mainly from encyclopedias about the occult. This database is good for finding encyclopedia articles and books about the history of gems.
AnthroSource
I selected this database since it is an anthropology database, and anthropology is one of the
disciplines that my topic falls under. It is difficult to search through this database because the
only limiters that are available is limiting by publication. I searched for “precious stones” and
found 2 sources, one of which I had already found on JSTOR. I tried “gemstones” next, but I
mainly found book reviews that weren’t really relevant. I searched “gems” and got a lot of
results, but they weren’t relevant. I tried the Boolean expressions, “gems AND history” and
“gems AND culture”, but there weren’t any relevant results, either. Even though I tried different
synonyms and different Boolean combinations, I still got the same or similar results every time.
This database has very little material on the history of gemstones.

Points of View Reference Center
While a database about getting the full view of controversial subjects sounds like it wouldn’t
yield any results about the history of gemstones, it actually does contain material about that. I
chose this database because of an article that I found about turquoise in human cultures,
specifically American cultures while searching OneSearch Manoa with the search string
“gemstones culture” before I realized that I misread the instructions. This very useful article was
hosted by this database, so potentially there could be similar articles on there. The database, like
Academic Search Complete, is hosted by EBSCOHost, and has similar search styles. I used the
same subject term “SU: GEMS & PRECIOUS STONES” and turned on the “Full Text” limiter
and found a few good results. A lot of the results were shared with Academic Search Complete,
most likely because they are hosted by the same company. Even so, I did manage to find a few
new results. From one of the articles, I managed to find the subject term “ARTIFICIAL GEMS
& PRECIOUS STONES”. That only gave me 3 results, and they were articles that I have
already seen before.

Google Scholar
This database provided by Google provides links to many different scholarly journals, books,
and websites from many different databases. I managed to find some useful new articles,
including a blog that’s about the history of jewelry by searching the Boolean search string
“gemstones AND history OR culture”. Using the Boolean string “precious stones AND history
OR culture”, I managed for find a few more sources, including a Master’s thesis about the
history and cultural significance of gemstones in early modern England. I didn’t find any good
resources from searching “artificial gemstones AND history”, but I did get decent results from
searching “precious stones AND meanings OR uses” and “gemstones AND meanings OR uses”.
Overall, Google Scholar is a decent source of materials about the history of gemstones.

Design and Applied Arts Index
This database focuses on scholarly journal articles about art and fashion, so it would stand to
reason that there will be a few articles about the history of gemstones, since gemstones have
been used in jewelry for thousands of years. By searching the Boolean string “gemstones AND
history, I managed to find one relevant source, but when I tried the other keywords and Boolean
combinations, I couldn’t find anything good. I mainly found articles about jewelry, but not about gemstones specifically. There were also a surprising amount of German language articles about gemstones.

**Dissertations and Theses Global**
Since I have managed to find a thesis about the cultural significance of gemstones in early modern England through Google Scholar, it is likely that other graduate school and PhD students have written similar dissertations and theses. This database has an option to limit results to full text papers only, so I turned that on and started searching. I used the string “gemstones AND history” and found two good results on the first page, but not much relevant material after that. When I searched “gemstones AND culture”, I found the same two dissertations and no other relevant material. I didn’t find anything relevant when searching with other keyword or Boolean strings either. Even so, the two dissertations found here, “The Idea of Lapidary Medicine: Its Circulation and Practical Applications in Medieval and Early Modern England: 1000-1750” and “Writing Gems: Ekphrastic Description and Precious Stones in Hellenistic Epigrams and Later Greek Prose”, are very useful, so this database can be useful in finding materials on the history of gemstones.

**Web of Science**
I chose this database since it is science based, but also does include interdisciplinary materials, so it is possible to find articles about the history of gems here. When you use the basic search and enter a keyword, after it retrieves items, you have the option to refine the search further with another search bar and multiple limiters. I set the limiter to English language articles only and started to search. I searched the usual Boolean strings, but I only found one relevant result, and that was when I searched “gemstones AND history”. This database is too technical for what I am looking for, but there is at least one source on this database that is about the history of gemstones.

**Web Resources**

**Google Advanced Search**
I chose Google Advanced Search because it seems like it would be a great way to find websites about the history of gems. This advanced search has a naturally Boolean structure to it, so I decided to try more Boolean strings. I also set the language limiter to English language materials only. I searched for “gemstones AND history OR culture OR meanings OR uses” and got several good results. I managed to find the website of a writer who had done a lot of research on gemlore, as well an article that she submitted to an online journal. I found a surprising amount of webpages about modern crystal healing, as well as pages about *Steven Universe*, which isn’t so surprising. With the other search strings such as “artificial gemstones AND history”, “precious stones AND history or culture”, “gemstones AND culture”, and “gemstones AND meaning OR history”, I managed to find several sources from each. Overall, Google Advanced Search is a good way to find websites and webpages about the history of gemstones.
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Youtube
Youtube has many different videos about many different types of things, so there might be a few educational videos on there about the history of gemstones. While searching the natural language search strings, “history of gemstones” and “meanings and uses of gemstones”, I managed to find a few useful videos. I didn’t have any luck when searching “artificial gemstones history”, “gemstones symbolism”, and gemstones in human culture”. I also saw a lot of videos about Steven Universe and about the Marvel Comics Infinity Gems, as well as many videos about crystal healing. I did manage to find a video about the history of birthstones, as well as a playlist of videos that are about the history of different types of gems and their meanings and uses in other cultures. Youtube is more useful if you want to look up videos about crystal healing, than about the history of gems.

Conclusion
I believe that creating this bibliography plan has helped me realize that it truly is important to think up of search strategies. I tend to not really think these things through, especially when I am in a hurry, or think up of a really basic strategy, I just throw solutions at the wall and see which ones stick. But with this project, I have to think up of a decent search strategy because of the amount of databases I have to search. I have to think up good databases and web resources to use, which can be difficult because there are so many databases out there, and a lot of them are specialized. Normally, I just use Google or one of the few databases that I know, and then call it a day, so it’s good that this project is making me branch out. The majority of the people out there are also like me, so the country as a whole could really benefit from the information literacy that I have gained from taking this class. Since the majority of people won’t go to library school for that, it would be best to try to incorporate that while doing reference interviews with them because they will have to be there anyway while we look for the answer for them, so why not learn while waiting so that they can be able to do it themselves?3

I also had to think up multiple ways of saying my topic in order to find keywords. A lot of the databases that I used didn’t have controlled vocabulary, so I had to use many different keywords. Some databases have more relevant results when I use “gemstones” and others with “precious stones”. “Gem” was not a good idea in general because many articles also use gem in a colloquial sense and that shows up in the search too. I’m also surprised at how many Boolean strings that I have been using for this bibliography, as I normally don’t use Boolean a lot. Quite a few of the databases that I have been using for this project have Boolean based searching. I think that my skill for creating Boolean search strings has improved while making this bibliography. Subject headings are also very, very useful when searching for books in an OPAC, much more than a typical keyword, natural language, or Boolean search. I found so many books that were relevant, and I didn’t have to wade through irrelevant results. Every book was

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3 Harmeyer, Dave, “Hybrid Reference: Blending the Reference Interview and Information Literacy,” The Reference Librarian 51, no.4 (October 2010): 359.
guaranteed to be at least partially about the topic that I was looking for. Searching by call number is very useful as well because you can find all of the books related to a topic there. In general, it is more useful than searching with natural language, but you need to find out exactly what terms to use first.

Something else that I have learned from this is the importance of patience and diligence while searching. Thanks to the Internet, we have become much more impatient with both reading and searching.4 People just quickly skim the results on the first page, but never bother to read deeper, never mind going beyond the first page. While doing this project, I was able to find great material on pages that weren’t the first page. I would have missed out on these great sources if I did what most people would do and just looked briefly at the first page. Of course, looking through all the pages isn’t an option for searches that turn up thousands of results, but I at least try to look through seven pages worth of search results. I also had to keep trying with multiple different searches. I like to think that is one of my strengths when searching and in general. You can’t just give up completely if you don’t find anything good at first. This patience and determination, as well as the searching skills that I have learned and practiced, and the practical experience that I have gained by doing this project have impacted me professionally for the better and it makes me feel more like the kind of professional that I want to be someday.

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Bibliography

*Academic Search Complete*, via UH Manoa Library.

Andrews, Angela Magnotti. “The History of All White Wedding Jewelry (Parts One and Two).” *Jewels of Note: Biographical Tales of Provenance About the World’s Most Magnificent and Important Jewelry*, January 23, 2013 (Part One) and January 24, 2013 (Part Two).

http://www.jewelry-history.com/2013/01/the-history-of-all-white-wedding.html.

*AnthroSource*, via UH Manoa Library.


http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/.
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*Design and Applied Arts Index*, via UH Manoa Library

*Dissertations and Theses Global*, via UH Manoa Library.


*Gale Virtual Reference Library*, via Hawaii State Public Library System.


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*Google Scholar.*


Harriss, Joseph A. “America’s Gemstones.” American Spectator 41, no. 2 (March 2008), 30-33.

Harriss, Joseph A. “Tantalizing Turquoise.” *Smithsonian,* August 1999.


Heather, P. J. “Precious Stones in the Middle-English Verse of the Fourteenth Century, I.” *Folklore* 42, no. 3 (September 30, 1931): 217-264.


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*JSTOR,* via UH Manoa Library


“Lapis Lazuli: Gemstones that Adorn the World.” *Express Tribune* (Karachi, Pakistan), November 1, 2015.


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*Points of View Reference Center*, via UH Manoa Library.


Scovil, Jeffrey A. “Topaz, Gem of Legends.” *Earth* 2, no. 4 (July 1993): 64.


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“Unearthing the Dazzle of Diamonds (And Other Gorgeous Gemstones).” USA Today, January 2011.


University of Hawaii at Manoa. “Voyager Catalog.” University of Hawaii at Manoa Library.


Web of Science, via UH Manoa Library.

Appendix I- Annotated Bibliography

The History of Gems

Andrews, Angela Magnotti. “The History of All White Wedding Jewelry (Parts One and Two).” *Jewels of Note: Biographical Tales of Provenance About the World’s Most Magnificent and Important Jewelry*, January 23, 2013 (Part One) and January 24, 2013 (Part Two).  
[http://www.jewelry-history.com/2013/01/the-history-of-all-white-wedding.html](http://www.jewelry-history.com/2013/01/the-history-of-all-white-wedding.html).  

This two part blog post is about how clear diamonds and white pearls became the de facto gemstones used in wedding jewelry. There is mention on the associations with colors and how it relates to what kind of gems are considered proper when in mourning, as well as the negative meaning of opals in Victorian England. It’s an interesting look on how a cultural tradition involving gemstones starts. It is from a blog that is focused on the history of jewelry, and the blog does cite multiple sources in their posts, meaning that it is a credible source.


This Master’s thesis was written about the cultural and historical significance of gemstones in early modern England. The author does a literature review of several books and articles about the cultural and historical significance of gemstones, many of which have been listed in the bibliography here such as *The Curious Lore of Gemstones* by George R. Kunz and *Magical Jewels of the Middle Age and the Renaissance* by Joan Evans. She talks about the magical meanings and uses of gemstones in early modern England, gemstones as a status symbol in early modern England, and Queen Elizabeth I and her jewels. It is a very informative look at the history of gemstones in early modern England.


This website provides the history, facts, origins, folklore, legends, and healing properties of over 60 different gems and fossils. The website linked here is a chart of the different types of gemstones leading to pages about each different gemstone. While the information given on these pages is very informative, not all of the gemstones have a linked page. Most of the gemstones and fossils have their own page, but certain gemstones like ruby and rose quartz do not have pages despite being listed and despite having a lot of information about them available. Even so, this website is a very good overview of the history, origins, and cultural significance of gemstones.

This is an article written about the history and lore of gems in different cultures. There is more of an emphasis on gems in myths, fairy tales, religious tales, and stories, but the author does talk about the history and the historical uses of gems as well since she believes that the history and the folklore of gems are deeply intertwined that it would be difficult to understand one without the other. The author also talks about herself and why she chose to research gemlore, and why other people are so interested in gems. The author also has her own website where she writes more about the history and lore of gemstones. It’s a very interesting look at the history and lore of gemstones, and useful if you want to know about gemstones in literature and oral stories.

**Finding and Making Gemstones**


This article is about the history of making artificial gems and their uses in modern society. The main focus is on the search of a way to reproduce rubies (a very rare gemstone) in the 1800s, and the uses for these gems both in jewelry and for industrial purposes such as lasers. There is some emphasis on the science of gems in order to explain how scientists have reproduced the gems, but it is written in a way that is understandable to people who aren’t scientifically minded. It is an interesting look at one of the ways people have worked in order to obtain a precious gem.


This book is all about pearls and how they are made. While there is a couple of chapters about pearls in different human cultures and their uses and meanings, the book mainly focuses on the scientific side and history of pearls, talking about what pearls are, the oysters that they come from, the history of pearl diving, and perliculture (how humans farm pearls). There are a lot of great illustrations in this book of pearls, items with pearls in them, and the process of getting pearls. It is a great overview about pearls in general.


This article is about the search for gemstones in Canada in the latter half of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. It lists the various geological societies that were searching for gems, the important scientists in this field at that time, the types of gems they found, and where the gems were found. There is a heavy emphasis on history here, and is a good resource for the human search for natural gems.
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**Gems in Human Cultures**

Harris, Joseph A. “America’s Gemstones.” *American Spectator* 41, no. 2 (March 2008), 30-33.

While it is difficult to tell by the title, this article is about turquoise and its history, uses, and meanings in many different cultures. While the author talks about the importance of turquoise worldwide, the primary emphasis is on the American Southwest and Mexico. He also interviews many different experts on turquoise such as geologists, traders, jewelers, and traditional craftsmen from the various Native American tribes of the American Southwest. It’s a great overview of turquoise and its impact on human cultures.


This book is about the superstitions, philosophy, and romance of gemstones in human cultures around the world. The author also talks about gems in literature, and gives many examples of their literal and symbolic meaning in novels, poems, and plays. Since this book was originally published in 1880 (and reprinted in 1968), some of the terminology and phrasing sounds somewhat old-fashioned, and there is no information about gems in the modern era.


This book is about gem lore in cultures worldwide; the many different myths, meanings, and uses for gems. The author talks about what the gemstone is, its mystical associations like the chakras and zodiac sign its associated with, and the historical and modern myths, meanings, and uses for thirty four different types of gems, from agate to zircon. While an excellent overview of the mythical lore and usage of gems, it unfortunately does not have any pictures. It would be useful to see pictures of the gems and some of their mystical uses.
## Appendix II: Search Terms Relevancy Chart

Results Relevancy:
- HR=Highly Relevant
- U=Useful
- SR=Somewhat Relevant
- NR=Not Relevant

Types of Search Performed:
- SU=Subject Search
- TI=Title Search
- KW=Keyword Search
- AF=All Fields
- SK=Subject Keyword
- CN= Call Number
- SH= Subject Heading

### Hawaii Voyager: Libraries of the University of Hawaii System

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<th>Search Terms</th>
<th>Items Retrieved</th>
<th>Relevancy</th>
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